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COUNTRY **Bulgaria**

SUBJECT **Composition and Equipment of Bulgarian Infantry Units**

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1. conditions in the Bulgarian Army May 1953.
2. "The equipment of an infantry soldier consisted of 35 to 40 items which were returnable and for which he had to sign receipts. Among others, the following items were issued: knapsack with various articles for combat readiness (clean underwear, needles, thread, (black and white), writing paper, envelopes, postal stamps, clean foot-cloths, a filled water bottle, and a helmet, although the latter was lately not used while on duty and there were rumors that they would be completely withdrawn. Soldiers had no personal dressing kits. Other items were : a wooden box with two partitions, one for salt and the other for paprika; shoe polish and shoe brush; washing soap (200 grams every 10 days); towel; two blankets; four sheets; two pillow-cases; a cap; a piece of tent cloth; an overcoat; a winter uniform; summer uniform; belt; haversack; shoes; mess tin; rifle; bayonet (some 60 cm long, of the Soviet-type) always fixed on the rifle; two cartridge pouches, each for 20 cartridges; gas mask, etc.
3. "Soviet uniforms were gradually introduced in the army beginning in 1950. Until the end of 1951 only those soldiers were issued Soviet-type uniforms who were going for furloughs or to a parade. Upon return, the uniforms had to be given up. In 1952, however, these uniforms were introduced to all units and in 1953 all soldiers were wearing Soviet-type uniforms.
4. "Gas masks were of two types: the old German-make in metal containers, and the new, Soviet-make, in canvas bags.

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5. "The rifle was the Soviet 'Vintovka' of the 1918-1930-type, 7.62 cal. It was kept locked in a closet in a room where the soldiers slept, along with cartridge pouch, gas mask and helmet. The key was in the hands of the platoon commander, who issued and collected these items each time. Normally each soldier had 60 cartridges and each time he went on duty he received all of them and when he returned he had to return the same amount.

Infantry Units

6. "One platoon ('ZVOD') consisted of 20 to 24 men under the command of a second lieutenant. Each platoon was divided into three sections ('Otdelenye') each of which had six to eight men under the command of a sergeant. The latter is armed with the Soviet automatic pistol 'Spagen', 7.62 cal. Each section ('Otdelenye') had one light machine gun of the Soviet-type, 'Dekteriov', 7.62 cal; other soldiers were armed with the Soviet 'Vintovka'-type rifles, 7.62 cal.
7. "One company ('Rota'), under the command of a lieutenant, consisted of 70 to 74 men, divided into three platoons.
8. "One battalion consisted of two companies and was under the command of a senior lieutenant. Apart from him there was also a political officer in the rank of lieutenant or senior lieutenant.
9. "The 1-st battalion consisted of two rifle companies, while the 2-nd battalion had one rifle company ('Strelkova Rota') and one company of heavy machine guns ('Tezhka Kartechna Rota'). The latter was composed of two platoons each equipped with three heavy machine guns of the Maxim Sokolov type, cal. 7.62, and of one mortar platoon. Mortars were of a small calibre and soldiers carried them on their backs.
10. "Apart from units enumerated above, the regiment also had one Signal platoon, (with telephone and radio sections) consisting of 24 men, one artillery battery, consisting of three German guns and three Soviet mortars, all horse driven (24 horses and about 70 men), and one service platoon with about 20 men and 14 horses.

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11. [REDACTED] Its commanding officer was Lieutenant-Colonel (fnu) Marinov [REDACTED] The political officer was Capt (fnu) Dragoshtinov [REDACTED] Commanding officer of the 1st battalion was Senior-Lieutenant (fnu) Adamov [REDACTED] and the political officer was Lieut (fnu) Atanasov. Commanding officer of the 2-nd battalion was Senior-Lieutenant (fnu) Nikolov [REDACTED] and the political officer was Lieut (fnu) Petrov [REDACTED] CO of the battery was Major Glinkov [REDACTED]

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